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The British Museum contains a superb collection, of which a special catalogue has been made, while other notable examples are found in the National Library at Paris. They have many points of interest, as, for example, their connection with the early history of printing ; but they claim the particular regard of the folk-lorist, who may some day throw light upon the identity of the kings and queens around whom so many new traditions have grown since they commenced their long reign upon the pasteboards.

“Toys would form another and most interesting department of the museum. How many of them must have lost their original significance, to be rediscovered, it is to be hoped, at the hands of the student of folk-lore ! The Noah’s ark remains, with its birds and beasts two and two, and Shem and Ham and Japhet, with little round wooden hats, to illustrate and confirm the possibilities in store in the future investigation. Poor Noah’s ark ! The children of this generation have quite foregone such trifles, and it may well take its place, and that not too soon, in the folk-lore museum. The East is replete with toys that illustrate popular myths, like the Indian miracle toy of the rescue of Krishna, in which the water recedes when it touches the figure of the infant god ; and the zoölogical mythology is also well displayed in the many creatures represented among children’s playthings.

“Coins, too, would have to have a place in the museum ; not the treasures usually prized by numismatists, but the broken sixpences and love tokens, the ‘touch money,’ and the many pieces valued as charms to invite good luck or drive away bad fortune.”

THE “Buffalo Express” (Illustrated), October 12, 1890, contains a long and interesting account of the Green Corn Dance of the Iroquois at the Cattaraugus Reservation, New York, by Mrs. Harriet Maxwell Converse. The relation well exhibits the religious ceremonies in their present form, highly Christianized and civilized. Space compels us to reserve for the next number extracts from this article.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

INTERNATIONAL FOLK-LORE CONGRESS.—The date of the Second International Folk-Lore Congress has been fixed to be held in London, on or about the 20th of September, 1891, under the presidency of Mr. Andrew Lang. It is to be hoped that there may be a good attendance from America. A guarantee fund has been formed, and the prospects for an agreeable meeting are highly flattering. Americans desirous to attend may communicate with the Honorable Secretary of the Folk-Lore Society, Mr. J. J. Foster, Offa House, Upper Tooting, London, S. W.

A PROPOSED FOLK-LORE MUSEUM.—Above will be found printed (page 312) portions of a paper written by a member of the Philadelphia Chapter,

concerning the interest attaching to folk-lore museums. The project of establishing such a museum, in connection with the work of collection carried on by the Chapter, having been suggested by a member, has been favorably received, and will be acted on during the following winter, when provision will be made for the care of the collection. A folk-lore library has already been established in connection with the Chapter, under the care of Mr. John W. Jordan, at the rooms of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, where it will be accessible for consultation by members of the Chapter, and others who may be interested.

MARRIAGE OF A WIDOW IN A SHIFT.—I find in Shearf and Westcoat's "History of Philadelphia," 1884, vol. ii. p. 1687, the following passage, which may be of interest to the readers of the "Journal of American Folk-Lore":—

"It is not doubtful that the ancient English tradition in regard to the marriage of a widow was carried into practice in Philadelphia in or about the year 1734. The tradition runs that the lady, clad in a single and most intimate garment, was stationed behind the door of her room; her arm was protruded through an opening in the door, and the minister officiated with that barrier between the bride and the groom. The arrangement was in consonance with the vulgar idea that a widow could only be held responsible for the debts of a deceased husband to the extent of what she carried upon her person when she was married a second time; hence grew the custom of 'marrying in the shift.' Kalm, writing in 1748, cites an instance of a widow affecting to leave all to her husband's creditors, and 'going from her former house to that of her second husband in her chemise.' Her new husband met her upon the way, and, throwing his cloak about her, cried out, 'I have lent her the garments.' The ceremony was most curiously like the marriage investiture that prevails to the present time in the eastern provinces of Hindostan."

W. J. Potts.

CAMDEN, N. J.

CANT AND THIEVES' JARGON. The article in the present number by Mr. W. C. Wilde may call attention to the question of the existence of a thieves' jargon in America, and to the point whether this jargon is purely European in character or has developed any special features in this country. The peculiar views of Mr. Wilde, on the old English origin of many of the words given by Matsell, will be regarded as open to controversy, since etymologies based on resemblance of sound go for little in modern philology. But the point which concerns us most is, whether the work of Matsell is really a reproduction of American Cant, or a free invention of his own, based on English works. We must confess that many of Matsell's words appear to us exceedingly fishy, and that the differences between those he gives and those contained in English glossaries may, as it seems to us, be mere careless errors of his own. There is a field for any one who has time and opportunity, to explore from personal observa-